

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
REMITTANCE ADVICE

041-394
Approved by OMB
3060-0589
Page 1 of 1
DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

(1) LOCKBOX # 358145	FCC/MELLON SEP 29 2004	SPECIAL USE ONLY
		FCC USE ONLY

SECTION A - PAYER INFORMATION

(2) PAYER NAME (if paying by credit card enter name exactly as it appears on the card) Blooston, Mordkofsky, Dickens, Duffy & Prendergast		(3) TOTAL AMOUNT PAID (U.S. Dollars and cents) \$895.00
(4) STREET ADDRESS LINE NO. 1 2120 L Street, NW, Suite 300		
(5) STREET ADDRESS LINE NO. 2		
(6) CITY Washington	(7) STATE DC	(8) ZIP CODE 20037
(9) DAYTIME TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code) (202) 659-0830	(10) COUNTRY CODE (if not in U.S.A.)	

FCC REGISTRATION NUMBER (FRN) REQUIRED

(11) PAYER (FRN) 0003-7141-93	(12) FCC USE ONLY
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IF MORE THAN ONE APPLICANT, USE CONTINUATION SHEETS (FORM 159-C)
COMPLETE SECTION BELOW FOR EACH SERVICE, IF MORE BOXES ARE NEEDED, USE CONTINUATION SHEET

(13) APPLICANT NAME Hanson Communications, Inc.		
(14) STREET ADDRESS LINE NO. 1 330 South Nebraska Street		
(15) STREET ADDRESS LINE NO. 2 P.O. Box 630		
(16) CITY Salem	(17) STATE SD	(18) ZIP CODE 57058
(19) DAYTIME TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code) (605) 425-2238	(20) COUNTRY CODE (if not in U.S.A.)	

FCC REGISTRATION NUMBER (FRN) REQUIRED

(21) APPLICANT (FRN) 0003-7666-56	(22) FCC USE ONLY
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COMPLETE SECTION C FOR EACH SERVICE, IF MORE BOXES ARE NEEDED, USE CONTINUATION SHEET

(23A) CALL SIGN/OTHER ID	(24A) PAYMENT TYPE CODE CUT	(25A) QUANTITY 1
(26A) FEE DUE FOR (PTC) 895.00	(27A) TOTAL FEE 895.00	FCC USE ONLY
(28A) FCC CODE 1		(29A) FCC CODE 2
(23b) CALL SIGN/OTHER ID	(24B) PAYMENT TYPE CODE	(25B) QUANTITY
(26B) FEE DUE FOR (PTC)	(27B) TOTAL FEE	FCC USE ONLY
(28B) FCC CODE 1		(29B) FCC CODE 2

SECTION D - CERTIFICATION

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I, _____, certify under penalty of perjury that the foregoing and supporting information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

SECTION E - CREDIT CARD PAYMENT INFORMATION

MASTERCARD _____ VISA _____ AMEX _____ DISCOVER _____

ACCOUNT NUMBER _____ EXPIRATION DATE _____

I hereby authorize the FCC to charge my credit card for the service(s) authorization herein described.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554

ORIGINAL

In the Matter of)	
)	
James O. Ekstrand)	File No.
Transferor)	
)	
Hanson Communications, Inc.)	
Transferee)	
)	
For Transfer of Control of Tri-County Telcom, Inc.,)	
a Local Exchange Carrier Holding Domestic Blanket)	
Authorizations under Section 214 of the Communications Act)	

**APPLICATION FOR TRANSFER OF CONTROL OF
DOMESTIC BLANKET SECTION 214 AUTHORIZATIONS**

James O. Ekstrand ("Mr. Ekstrand" or "Transferor") and Hanson Communications, Inc. ("Hanson" or "Transferee") hereby request Commission authorization for the transfer of control of Tri-County Telcom, Inc. ("Tri-County") and its domestic blanket Section 214 authorizations from Mr. Ekstrand to Hanson.

The proposed transaction entails the sale of all of the issued and outstanding shares of the capital stock of Tri-County by Mr. Ekstrand to Hanson. Tri-County is a South Dakota corporation that is located at 202 3rd Street in Emery, South Dakota, and that provides local exchange service to the Emery exchange (approximately 386 access lines) in Hanson County, South Dakota (2000 county population: 3,139) and to the Clayton exchange (approximately 58 access lines) in Hutchinson County, South Dakota (2000 county population: 8,075). After completion of the proposed transaction, Tri-County will continue to own and operate the Emery and Clayton exchanges and its other

(7) Description of the geographic areas in which the transferor and transferee (and their affiliates) offer domestic telecommunications services, and what services are provided in each area:

The local exchange service areas of Tri-County and McCook are depicted on the map in Exhibit A.

Tri-County

Tri-County is a rural telephone company that provides wireline local exchange service and exchange access service to residential and business customers in two South Dakota telephone exchanges. The two exchanges are the Emery exchange (approximately 386 access lines) in Hanson County, South Dakota (2000 county population: 3,139) and the Clayton exchange (approximately 58 access lines) in Hutchinson County, South Dakota (2000 county population: 8,075).

Tri-County owns and operates a cable television system (approximately 144 subscribers) in Emery, South Dakota.

Tri-County holds a 1.6 percent equity interest in Express Communications, Inc. ("Express"), an interexchange carrier that is owned by twenty-eight South Dakota local exchange carriers (including McCook).

Tri-County holds a 1.42 percent equity interest in South Dakota Network, LLC ("SDN"), a limited liability corporation owned by twenty-eight South Dakota independent local exchange carriers (including McCook) that provides centralized equal access and transport services throughout various portions of rural South Dakota.

Tri-County provides no other domestic telecommunications services, and has no subsidiaries or other affiliates that provide domestic telecommunications services.

Mr. Ekstrand

James O. Ekstrand does not own, control, or hold a 10 percent or greater equity interest in any entity other than Tri-County that provides domestic telecommunications services.

Hanson

Hanson does not presently provide domestic telecommunications services, and has no affiliates other than McCook that provide domestic telecommunications services.

McCook

McCook is a rural telephone company that provides wireline local exchange service and exchange access service to residential and business customers in six South Dakota telephone exchanges. The six exchanges are the Salem (approximately 1,001 access lines), Spencer (approximately 169 access lines) and Center (approximately 121 access lines) exchanges in McCook County, South Dakota (2000 county population: 5,832); the Alexandria exchange (approximately 518 access lines) in Hanson County, South Dakota (2000 county population: 3,139); the Canova exchange (approximately 207 access lines) in Miner County, South Dakota (2000 county population: 2,884); and the Winfred exchange (approximately 110 access lines) in Lake County, South Dakota (2000 county population: 11,276).

McCook owns and operates cable television systems at Salem, Alexandria, Spencer and Canova, South Dakota (approximately 579 total cable television subscribers).

McCook currently holds a 3.83 percent equity interest in Express, and a 3.83 percent equity interest in SDN.

McCook has no other affiliates that provide domestic telecommunications services.

(8) Statement as to how the application fits into one or more of the presumptive streamlined categories in section 63.03 or why it is otherwise appropriate for streamlined treatment:

McCook and Tri-County are incumbent independent local exchange carriers that have, in combination, far fewer than two percent of the nation's subscriber lines installed in the aggregate nationwide and no overlapping service areas. Altogether, McCook (approximately 2,126 access lines) and Tri-County (approximately 444 access lines) serve approximately 2,570 access lines in South Dakota. These lines comprise a very small fraction of the 3,656,255 access lines that constituted two percent of the nation's estimated 182,812,712 access lines as of June 2003. Source: Industry Analysis and Technology Division, Trends in Telephone Service, May 2004, Table 8.1.

The McCook and Tri-County service areas do not overlap. However, McCook's Alexandria exchange and Tri-County's Emery exchange are adjacent to each other along a 11-to-12- mile border in Hanson County, South Dakota; McCook's Alexandria exchange and Tri-County's Clayton exchange are adjacent to each other along a 3-to-4 mile border in Hutchinson County, South Dakota; and McCook's

The proposed transaction will have no adverse impacts upon competition. McCook (approximately 2,126 access lines) and Tri-County (approximately 444 access lines) are both presently small rural telephone companies, and will remain small rural telephone companies after the transaction. The proposed transaction will not affect the rural telephone company status or significantly change the competitive position of either entity.

The 444 South Dakota access lines involved in the proposed transaction comprise less than 0.13 percent of the estimated 346,112 access lines in the State of South Dakota as of June 2003. Source: Industry Analysis and Technology Division, Trends in Telephone Service, May 2004, Table 8.5.

McCook and Tri-County have long ago implemented equal access to interexchange carriers within all of their exchange areas. Both before and after the proposed transaction, customers in the Emery and Clayton exchanges will have the option to presubscribe to the toll services provided by well over forty interexchange carriers.

McCook and Tri-County own, in the aggregate, only a non-controlling 5.43 percent equity interest in Express, the interexchange carrier that is owned by 28 South Dakota local exchange carriers. Hence, the proposed transaction will not impact control of Express.

In sum, the proposed transaction will provide the rural customers of Tri-County's Emery and Clayton exchanges with a new owner that has a proven interest and record of operating high-quality rural telephone exchanges. It will absolutely have no adverse impact upon competition in domestic telecommunications markets.

Conclusion

In light of the foregoing facts and public interest considerations, the Commission is respectfully requested to grant authorization for the transfer of control of Tri-County and its domestic blanket Section 214 authorizations from Mr. Ekstrand to Hanson.

Respectfully submitted,

JAMES O. EKSTRAND

HANSON COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

Signed: _____

By  _____

Date: _____

Printed Name: Bryan K. Roth

Title: CEO

Date: 8/20/04

TRI-COUNTY TELCOM, INC.

By _____

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Conclusion

In light of the foregoing facts and public interest considerations, the Commission is respectfully requested to grant authorization for the transfer of control of Tri-County and its domestic blanket Section 214 authorizations from Mr. Ekstrand to Hanson.

Respectfully submitted,

JAMES O. EKSTRAND

HANSON COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

Signed: 

By _____

Date: SEPTEMBER 20, 2004

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

TRI-COUNTY TELCOM, INC.

By 

Printed Name: JAMES O EKSTRAND

Title: PRESIDENT

Date: SEPTEMBER 20, 2004